



ABERGAVENNY BOROUGH



Medical Officer

OF

Health's Report

1950

S. M. R. HARVEY, B.Sc., M.B., Ch.B., C.P.H.

Medical Officer of Health's Report, 1950.

*Mr. Mayor,
Chairman, Public Health Committee,
Aldermen and Councillors.*

I have the honour to present the 68th Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health, Abergavenny Borough. This has been another year of great endeavour on the part of all concerned in further consolidating the progress made in the implementation of the many Public Health Services provided by this ancient Borough. It was with deep regret that the sudden death of the first full-time Medical Officer of Health, Dr. F. C. R. Harvey, was noted on the 16th of August, 1950. The present Medical Officer commenced duties on January 1st, 1951. During the interim period the work of the Medical Officer of Health was carried out by Dr. H. V. M. Jones.

Under the de-centralisation of Health Services agreed upon by the County Council and the District Councils and the Ministry, a full-time Medical Officer of Health was appointed to Abergavenny Borough from 1st January, 1949. The duties of the Medical Officer of Health include, by agreement, supervision of the Public Health Departments of the other three Local Authorities (i.e., Abergavenny R.D.C., Usk U.D.C., and Pontypool R.D.C.) which, together, form No. 10 Health Area within the Administrative County of Monmouth.

The duties of the Medical Officer of Health are varied. Although tremendous improvements have been brought about in the standards of environmental hygiene and personal health services, in the present century, there may still be outbreaks of typhoid fever, dysentery, and other infectious diseases due to failure of water supplies and sewerage, or to the failure of the hygiene of milk and other food control. Therefore, it is still the task of the Medical Officer of Health and his (or her) fellow Local Government Officials to maintain constant vigilance. The statistical returns which are given in this report, show that the Borough remained remarkably free from any serious infectious disease.

Maternity and Child Welfare.

Babies can be seen once a week at the Presbyterian Hall, Abergavenny; expectant mothers can be seen fortnightly at the same Centre. Two Health Visitors are in attendance, and Welfare Food can be obtained at the Centre with the exception of National Dried Food, Cod Liver Oil and Orange Juice, which can be obtained either at the Food Office or at the W.V.S. Headquarters.

The monthly average number of babies seen at the Child Welfare Clinic was 192. This figure includes cases from the Abergavenny R.D.C. Area.

Domiciliary Midwifery Service.

Under the re-allocation of the District Midwifery Service, one District Midwife is resident in the Borough. The monthly average of nursing visits was 58.

District Nursing Service.

There is one District Nurse resident in the Borough. The monthly average number of nursing visits was 311.

Health Visiting.

One Health Visitor is doing the routine domiciliary visits, School Inspections (cleanliness of body and clothes), and attends the Maternity and Child Welfare Centre.

Domestic Help Service.

The County Council has provided a Domestic Help Service which is intended for those cases where there is illness, and where there is no able-bodied relative who could give the necessary assistance in the household.

The Service has been useful in providing assistance to aged persons and cases of Chronic sick, who otherwise would have had to be admitted to Hospitals, thereby helping to relieve the pressure upon hospital accommodation.

The Service is under the direction of the Area Committee Clerk (Mr. D. A. Lewis). Applicants for the Service are assessed to repay the cost of the Service in relation to their income; persons

with a gross income of less than £3/0/0 per week receive the Service free of charge.

The hours allocated to each case are recommended after personal investigation by the District Nurse, Midwife or Health Visitor, and are submitted to me for approval. Cases where the recommendation exceeds 30 hours per week have to be submitted by the Area Committee Clerk to the County Health Committee for investigation, except maternity cases.

There are approximately 35 Domestic Helps in the area of which approximately 20 are working in the Borough; all are engaged on a Temporary Part-time basis. The number of cases attended in No. 10 Area was 91; the average monthly number of hours worked was 2,399.

Ambulance Service.

Abergavenny Borough was served by two St. John ambulances with four drivers, and they provided the Ambulance Services for the Borough and adjacent area, under the central control of the County Ambulance Officer at Caerleon.

Vaccination against Smallpox and Immunisation against Diphtheria.

Under the National Health Service Act, 1946, vaccination against smallpox and immunisation against diphtheria has been carried out at the surgeries of the General Practitioners, and at the Maternity and Child Welfare Centres; in both cases free of charge.

The figures for vaccination against smallpox and immunisation against diphtheria for the Borough are as follows:

Vaccination against Smallpox, 1950

Age Groups—	Under 1 yr.	1 to 4 yrs.	5 to 14 yrs.	Over 15 yrs.	Total
	16	4	-	6	26

Immunisation against Diphtheria.

Age Groups—	Under 5 yrs.	5 to 14 yrs.	Total
	85	2	87

Since the compulsory vaccination against Smallpox has been abolished, the Borough of Abergavenny, like the rest of the country,

followed the trend of a decrease in vaccination; from the public health point of view it is very regrettable. The occurrence of Smallpox in Brighton at the end of 1950 and the beginning of 1951, shows that we are not free from the possibility of more serious outbreaks from this disease. Great encouragement is given to mothers for both vaccination against smallpox and immunisation against diphtheria, but the results are more encouraging for immunisation than for vaccination. In the Borough of Abergavenny the Public Health Department sends a Birthday Card to parents reminding them of the advantages of immunisation.

Health Education.

The early part of the last century saw the birth of Public Health as we know it now. The main object being the provision of wholesome water supply, sanitation, and notification of infectious diseases. At the beginning of this century the influence of the environment became more apparent and more emphasis was given to this new factor. We realise now that we cannot complete the picture of ideal health without education. Under the auspices of the Central Council for Health Education, Local Health Authorities have undertaken a campaign to improve the knowledge of the Community on health matters, and a County Health Education Officer was appointed in 1948. The aim is health consciousness, not disease consciousness. We must improve our body cleanliness and home cleanliness, including an improvement in our handling of Food.

In order to further disseminate knowledge in respect of Health Education, a Health Conference will be held at the Town Hall, Abergavenny, in 1951; to which all members of the public will be cordially invited.

Mental Health Service.

A County Psychiatrist was appointed in 1948 for the purpose of a Mental Health Service. This Service is co-ordinated with the Regional Hospital Board, and Hospital Management Committees.

No Adult Guidance Clinics are held in Abergavenny, but individual cases, patients suffering from early nervous strain, and who are finding difficulty in adjusting themselves either in their home or at their work, are seen by Dr. J. Newcombe, the County Psychiatrist. Cases considered too far advanced are referred to the Regional Hospital Board Psychiatrist.

Welfare Services.

The Welfare Officer of No. 10 Area caters for the needs of Abergavenny Borough as regards Welfare Services, which come within the provisions of the National Assistance Act, 1948.

Medical Appliances.

The location of the Medical Appliances Depot for the Borough is St. John Ambulance Hall, Abergavenny.

Location of Medical Officer of Health and Area Health Office.

The County Council has now taken over Leven House, Abergavenny, and the Services for which I am responsible are now being operated from there; the Maternity and Child Welfare Centre will also be accommodated at Leven House at an early date.

VITAL STATISTICS.

	1938	1947	1948	1949	1950
Area (in Acres) ...	2398	2398	2398	2938	2398
Population (estimated) ...	7925	8427	8532	8597	8534
Inhabited Houses (according to Rate Book) ...	2366	2388	2455	2495	2518
Rateable Value ...	£49304	£51658	£53028	£55296	£56000
ld. Rate ...	£188	£202	£203	£203	£207

1950	Total	M.	F.	1950	Borough	County
Live Births —						
Legitimate	120	64	56	Birthrate per 1,000 of estimated resident population ...	14'3	17'4
Illegitimate	2	0	2			
Total	122	64	58			

Still Births—

Legitimate	6	2	4	Rate per 1,000 total (Live & Stillbirths) Births ...	61'5	0'58
Illegitimate	2	2	0			
Total	8	4	4			

Deaths—

All Causes	145	77	68	Death Rate per 1,000 of estimated resident population ...	10'6	12'3

Deaths from Puerperal Causes—

Puerperal Sepis	...	Nil	Rate per 1,000 births... (Live & Stillborn) ...	...	Nil	Nil
Other Puerperal Causes	...	Nil				
Total	...	Nil		Total	...	Nil

Death Rate of Infants under one year of age—

All Infants per 1,000 Live Births	...	49'2
Legitimate	„	Legitimate Live Births ... 50
Illegitimate	„	Illegitimate ... —

Deaths from Cancer—all ages ... M. 7. F. 8. Total 15
Average age 63'3

Measles	...	...	...	Nil
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	Nil
Diarrhoea, under 2 years of age	...	...	...	Nil
Children under 1 year	Total 5.	Legitimate	6	
		Illegitimate	Nil	
Tuberculosis Pulmonary	...	M. 2.	F. Nil	
Non-Pulmonary		Nil	Nil	

— Total 2

Ages of Deaths of Children under one year of age—

Under 1 week	...	...	2	}	6
1 to 2 weeks	...	...	1		
2 to 3 weeks	...	...	—		
3 to 4 weeks	...	...	3		
1 to 3 months	...	...	—	}	—
3 to 6 months	...	...	—		
6 to 9 months	...	...	—		
9 to 12 months	...	...	—		
Total under 1 year			...		<u>6</u>

<i>Year.</i>	<i>Populations.</i>	<i>Live Births.</i>	<i>Deaths.</i>	<i>Birth Rate</i>
1931 ...	8490 (Estimated)			
	8608 (Census)	... 137	119	16.10
1938 ...	7925 (New Borough)	... 115	108	14.50
1939 ...	7832	... 118	144	15.10
1940 ...	8407	... 122	149	14.50
1941 ...	8769	... 130	135	14.60
1942 ...	8468	... 134	113	18.80
1943 ...	8174	... 127	122	15.56
1944 ...	7931	... 139	104	17.50
1945 ...	8275	... 141	120	17.0
1946 ...	8439	... 147	110	17.5
1947 ...	8427	... 152	115	18.0
1948 ...	8532	... 146	138	17.1
1949 ...	8597	... 134	94	15.6
1950 ...	8534	... 130	145	15.23

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Scarlet Fever. During the whole year 21 cases were notified.

Whooping Cough. 8 cases were notified.

Measles. 4 cases were notified.

Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis. Nil.

Infantile Paralysis. Nil.

Erysipelas. 1 case was notified.

Diphtheria. No cases were notified.

Dysentery. No cases were notified.

Encephalitis. 1 case notified.

TUBERCULOSIS.

Notified: Pulmonary-M. 8 F. 3 Non-Pulmonary-M. Nil F. 1

Deaths: „ M. 2 F.— „ M. — F.—

INFLUENZA. No severe epidemic. Deaths—M. 2. F. 1.

Notifiable Infectious Diseases (other than Tuberculosis)
classified according to age groups :

Disease,	Total	Age 0—5	Age 5—10	Age 10—15	Age 15—25	Over 25	Treated in Hospital
Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Scarlet Fever	20	7	13	...	...	...	13
C.S. Meningitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Measles	4	3	1	...	...	...	...
Whooping Cough	8	...	...	...	...	...	...
Enteric Fever (Para B)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Infantile Paralysis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Dysentery	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Erysipelas	1	...	...	...	...	1	...
Encephalitis	1	...	...	...	...	1	1
Acute Primary Pneumonia	4	2	1	...	...	1	1

TUBERCULOSIS.

New Cases and Mortality during 1950.

AGE	NEW CASES				DEATHS			
	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0—1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
1—5	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
5—10	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
10—15	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
15—20	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
20—30	1	4	...	...	...	...	...	...
30—40	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
40—50	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
50—60	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Totals	5	4	...	...	...	...	...	..

Discussion of the Tables.

In the last five years the estimated population of the Borough has shown slight fluctuations.

The Birth Rate per 1,000 population remains slightly below the Birth Rate for the County of Monmouthshire—14·3 against 17·4.

The Death Rate per 1,000 population is below the Death Rate of the County—10·6 against 12·3.

The Death Rate of Infants under one year of age per 1,000 live births is 49·2 as compared with 39·8 for the County.

The continued fall in the birth rate in Abergavenny, as in the country generally, calls for renewed effort in preserving infant life, so that the Infant Mortality Rate may be further reduced from its existing level.

Infectious Diseases.

It is difficult to discuss the various notifications because of the small number received during 1950, nevertheless they show the absence of any serious infectious disease. SCARLET FEVER continued to be of a mild type. The triumph of preventive medicine

is illustrated by the fact that no cases of DIPHTHERIA were notified in the Borough during the year. The incidence of MEASLES was well below that prevailing in the country as a whole. There were more cases of WHOOPING COUGH as compared with 1949, but all made a good recovery.

Tuberculosis.

There were 9 cases of TUBERCULOSIS notified in 1950, an improvement over 1949, when 19 new cases were notified. There is still urgent need for suitable accommodation for many of these cases, especially when living in overcrowded conditions. It is not only our duty to do all in our power for the unfortunate person who has succumbed to the disease, but we should also try to safeguard the contacts from infection. It is well known that bad housing influences the health of the people and it is encouraging that the post-war housing efforts are being maintained in Abergavenny. In conclusion, it is to be noted that though there is still considerable overcrowding in the Borough, other sanitary circumstances have continued to be satisfactory.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

S. M. R. HARVEY.

Medical Officer of Health.

Water Supply.

The method of treatment of water in the Borough is by chlorination.

During the year 11 samples of water were taken, 7 of which proved unsatisfactory, and 4 satisfactory. 1 of the unsatisfactory samples was from a private supply.

The major number of samples were taken during the process of repairing the fracture in the reservoir referred to in the previous report. The object being to evolve the system of complete chlorination of the raw water from the springs which was discharged directly into the mains, by-passing the reservoir, without producing a condition of over-chlorination. This was eventually worked out satisfactorily and a good standard was maintained.

In the case of the private supply, because of the unsatisfactory quality of the water in the piped supply, an emergency drinking supply was provided in tanks adjoining the premises connected to this supply, until such time as they could be connected to the mains. All the premises except two not directly adjacent to the new mains were connected up by the end of the year.

To ensure a satisfactory quantity of supply, arrangements are being made with the Newport County Borough to connect up to their supply which passes near the boundary of the Borough in the adjoining Rural District Council.

Milk Supply.

Periodic samples were taken from retailers and the quality of milk generally was found to be good. Of 13 samples taken, 6 were found to be unsatisfactory. Of those found to be unsatisfactory, 6 retailers were from dairies in the Borough.

The adverse reports were sent to the Milk Production Officer for her attention.

Inspection of Places where Food is Prepared.

The thirteen premises in the town were inspected regularly and were found to be in a satisfactory condition.

Fish Fryers.

There are 3 in the Borough and regular inspections are carried out to ensure that they are maintained in a satisfactory state.

Bakehouses.

9 premises were in use during the year. 20 visits were made. Limewashing was carried out in 4 premises following verbal notice. Conditions generally were fairly satisfactory.

Butchers' Shops.

Small goods, including brawn, polonies, pies, faggots, etc., were prepared at 9 butchers' establishments.

At the butchers' establishments the work is carried out in a special room, and electric power is available. All the premises are regularly visited by the Inspector, and the conditions were found to be satisfactory.

Shops Act, 1934.

52 visits were made. Conditions generally were found to be satisfactory.

Factories and Workshops.

35 visits were made, and conditions were found to be satisfactory.

HOUSING.

The first site, Pitt's Nurseries, in the Authorities post-war housing schemes were completed. Site works on the Llwynu Farm Estate were carried on and 21 houses were completed.

16 houses were completed by private enterprise.

66 houses were completed by the Local Authority bringing the total number owned by the Local Authority to 384.

Inspection of Dwelling Houses during the Year.

(1) (a) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	...	...	...	870
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	...			940
(2) (a) Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above which are inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulation, 1925...				40
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	...			63
(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	...	...	...	Nil
(4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	...	...	...	52

Remedy of Defects during the Year without service of formal notice.

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers	...	...	...	31
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Action under Statutory Powers during the Year.

(a) Proceedings under Sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936:			
(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	...		Nil
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices	...		Nil
(a) By Owners	...	...	Nil
(b) By Local Authority in default of Owners	...		Nil
(b) Proceeding under Public Health Acts :			
(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	...	...	9
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices...			9
(a) By Owners	...	...	9
(b) By Local Authority in default of Owners	...		Nil
(c) Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1930:			
(1) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made	...	...	8
(2) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or rooms having been rendered fit	...	...	1

Eradication of Bed Bugs and Other Vermin.

(a) Number of Council Houses :			
(1) Found infested	...	...	3
(2) Disinfested	...	...	3
(b) Number of Other Houses :			
(1) Found infested	...	...	12
(2) Disinfested	...	...	12

These houses were visited either in normal house-to-house inspections or as a result of complaints from the tenant.

Infectious Diseases.—Disinfection.

Terminal disinfection was carried out by gas and disinfectant, etc., in 25 premises.

Rodent Control.

One full time operator was employed with casual assistance when necessary.

Two maintenance treatments of the sewers were carried out with satisfactory results.

Continuous surveys of the district were maintained and an observation from these reports indicate that the sewers provide easy access and breeding grounds for rats. The number of surface infestations appear to increase gradually up to the time at which the maintenance treatment of the sewers is due. When this latter is completed the number of surface infestations are almost immediately reduced to a negligible amount.

On the Corporation's Sewage Beds and Refuse Tips the low incidence of rat population was maintained.

During the year 116 surface infestations were dealt with.

Ice Cream.

There are 5 manufacturers in the town who are making ice-cream in accordance with the Ice-Cream (Heat Treatment) Regulations. 2 carry out pasturisation and 3 use a cold mix.

All the manufacturers are in a small retail trade.

The other 22 premises registered retail only ready wrapped ice-cream supplied by wholesalers.

18 samples were taken and results were not very satisfactory.

Frequent routine inspections were carried out in these premises, and examinations of methods of processing.

Meat and Other Foods.

The following tables showing the number of animals killed, particulars of meat condemnations and incidence of disease.

Number killed :

Cattle.	Calves.	Sheep & Lambs.	Pigs.
911	1002	6975	2792

Number inspected :

911	1002	6975	2792
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All Diseases except Tuberculosis :

Whole carcasses condemned—

Cattle.	Calves.	Sheep & Lambs.	Pigs.
32	7	33	9

Carcase of which some part or organ was condemned—

Cattle.	Calves.	Sheep & Lambs.	Pigs.
540	30	700	19

Percentage of the number inspected with disease other than Tuberculosis—11·73%

Tuberculosis only :

Cattle.	Calves.	Sheep & Lambs.	Pigs.
6	Nil.	Nil.	1

Carcase of which some part or organ was condemned—

Cattle.	Calves.	Sheep & Lambs.	Pigs.
58	2	Nil.	93

Percentage of the number of animals killed affected with Tuberculosis—1·37%

Percentage of the number of cattle killed affected with Tuberculosis—7·02%

Total weight of carcase meat condemned—7 tons 6 cwts. 48 lbs.

Total weight of offal condemned—4 tons 16 cwts. 89 lbs.

Other Foods condemned were as follows :

63 tins Peas ; 14 tins Nestles Milk ; 82 Evaporated Milk ; 3 packets Cornflakes ; 3 tins Scotch Broth ; 4 tins Beef and Cereals ; 12 tins Veal and Ham ; 1 tin Ox Tongue ; 10 tins Luncheon Meat ; 2 tins Pork ; 4 tins Jellied Veal ; 15 tins C.C. Mutton ; 1 tin Chopped Ham ; 16 tins C.C. Beef ; 1 tin Gal. Pork and Beef ; 34 tins Pork Brawn ; 6 tins Steak ; 1 tin Pork Luncheon ; 43 tins Beans ; 3 tins Skimmed Milk ; 3 packets Shredded Wheat ; $12\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. Cooked Ham ; 1 tin Rabbit ; 1 tin Champgnens ; 1 Christmas Pudding ; 1 tin Shredded Cocoanut ; 6 tins Macedons ; $3\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. Brawn ; 8 lbs. Lunch Meat ; $1\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. Pork ; $14\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. Veal ; 1 tin Sausages ; 177 packets Pastry Mixture ; 149 packets Bun Flour ; 175 packets Sweet Mixture ; 18 lbs. Ice-cream Powder ; 3 tins Custard Powder ; 9 packets Jelly Tablets ; 136 tins Tomatoes ; 1 tin Mince Meat ; 1 drum Pepper ; 1 tin Spinach ; 4 tins Mixed Vegetables ; 1 tin Veg. Salad ; 1 jar Pickled Cabbage ; 1 jar Piccalilli ; 2 jars Sweet Pickles ; 35 lbs. Sugar ; 3 bottles Grape Juice ; 10 tins Oranges ; 31 tins Plums ; 29 tins Pears ; 1 tin Cherries ; 18 tins Grapes ; 1 tin Greengages ; 9 lbs. Prunes ; 2 lbs. Figs ; 1 tin Sliced Pine ; 7 tins Strawberries ; 1 tin Blackberries ; 39 tins Peaches ; 8 tins Rhubarb ; 2 tins Gooseberries ; 2 tins Apples ; 6 tins Lemon Juice ; 4 tins Puree ; 2 tins Chocolate Spread ; 2 tins Ice-cream Powder ; 6 tins Tomato Juice ; $\frac{3}{4}$ lb. Tea ; 3 tins Coffee ; 4 lbs. Chocolate ; 21 tins Soups ; 18 tins Fish Paste ; 5 tins Meat Paste ; 18 tins Carrots ; 55 tins Beetroot ; 2 tins Meat and Gravy ; $56\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. Cheese ; 82 dozen Eggs ; $79\frac{3}{4}$ lbs. Bacon ; $13\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. Butter ; 3 tins Golden Syrup ; 3 tins Melon Jam ; 3 tins Marmalade ; 7 tins Spaghetti ; 1 tin Shrimps ; 8 tins Brislings ; 1 tin Sild ; 27 tins Sardines ; 10 tins Salmon ; 2 tins Herrings ; 1 tin Pilchard ; 5 tins Crawfish ; 2 tins Tunny Fish ; 3 tins Mussels ; 1 tin Megrim ; 4 stone Herrings ; 41 stone Hake ; 5 stone Cod Fillets ; 3 stone Smoked Fillets ; 10 lbs. Pollack ; 30 lbs. Sausages.

RAINFALL IN 1950.

Rain Gauge ... { Diameter of Funnel, 5 inches.
 ... { Height of Top } Above Ground 1 ft.
 ... { " " Sea Level 215 ft.
 Situation :- Bailey Park.

<i>Month.</i>		<i>Total Depth Inches.</i>
January	...	·80
February	...	6·93
March	...	2·32
April	...	3·06
May	...	2·29
June	...	1·29
July	...	5·24
August	...	4·96
September	...	3·84
October	...	1·50
November	...	5·02
December	...	2·03
Total		39·28

ROGER J. HOWELLS,
 Sanitary Inspector.

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